Screen - Immunize - Inform
Emergency Department Evaluation and Management of Patients at High Risk for Hepatitis A

As of 2019, over 700 Tennessee residents have been infected with hepatitis A. The most effective way to reduce spread of the outbreak is ensuring as many people at high risk for hepatitis A receive at least one dose of hepatitis A vaccine.

Prevention begins with screening for risk factors

Do any of these risk factors apply to the patient?
- Persons who are experiencing homelessness
- Persons who use injection and non-injection drugs
- Men who have sex with men

If YES, screen for signs and symptoms of hepatitis A AND obtain vaccine history.

Obtain vaccine history
- Check EMR for hepatitis A vaccine or
- Ask if the patient has recently received the hepatitis A vaccine
- Ask the patient if they have recently been diagnosed with hepatitis A

If the patient has received a dose of hepatitis A vaccine or has a history of hepatitis A infection, there is no need to proceed with screening.

If the patient has not received any doses of hepatitis A vaccine and has no known history of hepatitis A infection, proceed with screening.

Screen for signs and symptoms
- Observe standard precautions
- Observe contact precautions when caring for incontinent and diapered patients
- Observe hand hygiene with soap and water for at least 10-20 seconds
- Confirm diagnosis with serum IgM testing

Administer vaccine

Don’t forget!
- Report suspected and confirmed cases immediately to the local health department and hospital infection control
- State-funded vaccine must be entered into TennIIS, depending on EMR
- Patients are infectious for one week after symptom onset

Adapted with permission from Dr. Kristi L. Koenig, EMS Medical Director, County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency

Sources